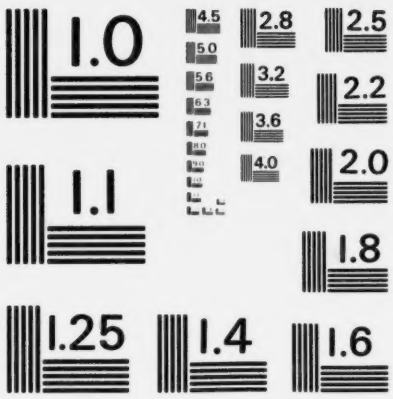
I OF I
ED
030743



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 030 743 VT 008 770

By-Miller, Ann R.
Program of the Interagency Committee on Occupational Classification.
Bureau of the Budget, Washington, D.C. Office of Statistical Standards.
Report No-WP-66-2
Pub Date Mar 66
Note-11p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.65
Descriptors-*Classification, *Data Collection, *Federal Government, *Methods, Occupational Information, *Occupations
Identifiers-Classified Index of Occupations and Industries, Convertibility List Of Occupations, Dictionary Of Occupational Titles

This working paper provides background information for persons interested in occupational data by informing them of the work of the committee, and serves as a basis for discussion of the direction of future work in this area. The current intensive interest in occupations and occupationally classified data, and the increase in the number of agencies collecting and using such data suggest the need for a review of the occupational classifications systems presently available and of relevant procedural and compilation policies. Discussion of classification systems includes the Convertibility List of Occupations, 1940; the 1960 Census of Populations Classified Index of Occupations and Industries; The Dictionary of Occupational Titles, 1965; and The International Standard Classification of Occupations as developed by the International Labor Office. Numerous government agencies are cooperating in the development of procedures for the collection and classification of occupational data. The committee plans, as one of its long range objectives, to investigate the possibility of establishing a standard occupational classification, analogous to the Standard Industrial Classification, and to establish such a system if it appears possible. (CH)

EDO 30743

Research Library
Center for Vocational & Technical Education
C1

3a

Working Paper No. 66-2

PROGRAM OF THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE
ON OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION
U. S. BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

Progress Report on the Review of Collection and Classification Procedures in Federal Agencies and Plans for Future Work

Prepared by

2

Ann R. Miller

University of Pennsylvania and
Consultant, U. S. Bureau of the Budget

VT008770

(3)
3
Office of Statistical Standards
Bureau of the Budget
~~Executive Office of the President~~
Washington, D. C. ~~20503~~

March, 1966

BBB00860

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Bureau of the Budget
Washington, D. C. 20503

PROGRAM OF THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION, U. S. BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

Preface

The report of the Interagency Committee on Occupational Classification includes a brief summary of the Committee's current work and some indication of possible future activities. It is issued as a working paper at this time with two purposes in mind: First, it provides background information for persons interested in occupational data and informs them of the work of the Committee and, secondly, it serves as a basis for discussion of the directions which future work in this area should take.

The Office of Statistical Standards of the U. S. Bureau of the Budget has long been concerned with coordinating the activities of the numerous Federal agencies working in the field of occupational data and information. Starting with the formation of the Joint Committee on Occupational Classification, established in the late 1930's by the Central Statistical Board (now the Office of Statistical Standards) and the American Statistical Association, an Interagency Committee has been in continuous operation.

Recently, proposals have been made for new directions for the work of this Committee and, as a result, the Committee is sponsoring a variety of projects designed to test some of the suggested avenues for improvement of Federal data.

Comments or additional suggestions arising out of this working paper will be welcomed by the Office of Statistical Standards.

Raymond T. Bowman
Assistant Director for
Statistical Standards

P117

PROGRAM OF THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION, U. S. BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

Progress Report on the Review of Collection and Classification Procedures in Federal Agencies and Plans for Future Work

The current extensive interest in occupation and occupationally classified data and the increase in the number of agencies collecting and using such data suggest the need for a review of the occupational classification systems presently available and of relevant procedural and compilation policies. A review is particularly desirable in the context of the present concern with such issues as the ramifications of technological change, the training and retraining of the labor supply, the concomitant requirements of educational planning. It is particularly timely in view of the recent publication of the new Dictionary of Occupational Titles and the initiation of planning for the 1970 Census of Population.

The Bureau of the Budget, working through its Interagency Committee on Occupational Classification, has recently undertaken such a review. As a first step, the views of interested Federal agencies were solicited in an inquiry sent out by the Bureau late last summer. Specifically, agencies were asked to note their collection and classification procedures (for those that collected occupational information), the types of uses to which they put this information, their foreseeable needs for new types of occupational information, their evaluation and suggestions for improvement of currently available information, and their reactions to the desirability of attempting to establish a standard occupational classification. Replies to this inquiry have been abstracted in several summaries that deal with specific aspects of the problem.

The work of the Occupational Classification Committee has been organized in accordance with what seem to be the most urgent considerations. Although we are undertaking a number of projects simultaneously, the following list is more or less in the order of priority of attention.

1. Revision of the Convertibility List of Occupations, (published by the Bureau of the Budget in October 1940). This list related the occupational categories used in the 1940 Census of Population and those used in the first (1939) edition of the Bureau of Employment Security's Dictionary of Occupational Titles. The newly published (1965) Dictionary of Occupational Titles represents a basic change in the structure of occupational classification; that is, unlike other editions that have appeared since 1939, it is not merely a revision and updating of the original classification system. The old Convertibility List, therefore, is no longer usable in connection with it. Since a number of Federal agencies use both the Census and BES classifications, for example, coding detailed occupation by the DOT but grouping occupations under the Census major occupation groups, it is essential that a new Convertibility List be developed.

The BES has agreed to undertake the first step in the development of this project: within the next month coding of the occupational titles listed in the 1960 Census of Population's Classified Index of Occupations and Industries by the codes of the new DOT will begin. When this is completed, it will be possible to analyze the relationship between the two classification structures, and, it is hoped, to publish a revised Convertibility List.

2. Improvement of the quality and usefulness of Census of Population and Current Population Survey data on occupations. A document outlining what appear to be the major avenues of research required in this area was prepared early in the fall of 1965 and a Subcommittee on Research of the Committee on Occupational Classification was set up to explore these. The details of the work of this Subcommittee are contained in the notes for the two meetings it has held so far but its major interests can be summarized as follows:

a. Collection procedures: the Census Bureau is conducting a series of small-scale tests on "the selection of respondent" in households, in the hope of determining the conditions of response under which the best data can be obtained. These tests consist of three samples: one in which the normal CPS interview procedure is followed; one in which an attempt is made to interview the individual concerned; and one in which advance forms, to be filled in by individual

respondents, are mailed to the household prior to the enumerator's visit.

The Subcommittee on Research is currently reviewing proposed new schedule questions on occupation, prior to their being tested in the field, and is preparing a document incorporating its reactions to the questions suggested by the Census Bureau staff and its own suggestions with regard to possible new types of questions.

The Social Security Administration, as part of a matching study relating its records to those for identical individuals in Internal Revenue Service records and in the Current Population Survey, is comparing occupation entries obtained on IRS and CPS returns. It has agreed to provide a tabulation for the Committee's information.

The Subcommittee is also interested in the collection of occupational data from non-household respondents (i.e. employers) and the possibilities of relating such data to Census household returns. Its activities with regard to this are outlined below, under heading 3.

b. Classification procedures: The Bureau of Employment Security has agreed to try to code household data, supplied by the Bureau of the Census, by the new DOT classification structure. If this proves feasible, the Subcommittee will undertake an analysis of the data so classified in order to evaluate the desirability of using the type of occupational structure embodied in the new DOT for Census and Current Population Survey returns. These data will also be of considerable help in developing the revised Convertibility List discussed above, under heading 1.

The Bureau of the Census has agreed to review the content of its residual occupational categories (the "not elsewhere classified" category under each of the major occupation groups) with a view to determining how the size of these may be reduced. These nonspecific categories included close to one-third of total employment in 1960 and their size has been the occasion of considerable complaint on the part of users of Census data.

As work on the proposed new schedule questions (discussed in 2a. above) develops and these questions are tested in the field, the Committee will review the results for their implications with regard to possible changes in the classification system that may be feasible under the new conditions.

One major aspect of the work on Census classification problems that the Committee is aware of is the need for maintaining comparability with the past in the occupational series. This consideration will continue to be in the forefront as our work proceeds.

3. Collection of occupation data from establishments. No comprehensive program for the collection of occupation data from establishments exists at present, although a number of programs dealing with specific segments are in operation. Several proposals for undertaking such a program have been suggested, including the collection of occupation data in conjunction with the W-2 forms submitted annually to the Internal Revenue Service, or in conjunction with the quarterly employer returns to the Social Security Administration. Compliance reports from Federal contractors and returns made to the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission constitute another potential source of broad occupational data from establishments.

A particularly promising set of data are those collected by the Bureau of Employment Security as part of its program for revising the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. The Bureau conducts a continuing series of studies on staffing patterns in selected establishments covering the whole range of industries included in the Standard Industrial Classification. These data are presently used only internally for job analysis purposes, that is, to

uncover new job titles or revise the job descriptions of old titles, but the Committee is hoping to explore their usefulness for a number of other purposes as well.

Another program, currently in the planning stage, is that proposed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Bureau is expecting to undertake shortly some pilot studies for a program of collecting occupation data from establishments on a sample basis. The problems of coding and classifying such data have still to be resolved and the Committee hopes to keep itself informed about these as the program develops.

BLS has under consideration the inclusion among its pilot studies of one designed to test the relationship between establishment and household data on occupation. This study would involve the cooperation of the Bureau of the Census and use of its household survey data. It is hoped that the analysis would include not only the matching of specific occupation returns for the same individual under the two collection systems but also an evaluation of the feasibility of relating occupation as returned by the establishment to household data on other enumerated characteristics.

The National Science Foundation is also considering a matching study, relating data reported in the National Register to that obtained for the same individuals from surveys of different types, including establishment surveys.

The Occupational Classification Committee is currently considering a proposal to ask a few large-scale establishments to attempt to code their work forces by the new DOT classification. Interest has been expressed by several employer associations in the establishment of a general classification scheme that could be utilized for their own statistical purposes and it is hoped that perhaps from among these some volunteers may be obtained. Such an undertaking would be useful from a number of viewpoints: establishment evaluation of the new DOT classification structure would be very valuable; experiments with having establishments code their employees by a standard scheme, rather than merely return occupational descriptions to be coded by a central agency, would have implications for the development of any large-scale system of collecting occupation data in this way; the success with which establishments can convert their own occupational designations to a standard classification would be an indicator of the feasibility of setting up a Standard Occupational Classification system.

4. General classification problems. The problem of grouping detailed occupation categories into broader categories is one of considerable concern. The nature of such groupings is particularly important with respect to current monthly data on the labor force published in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment and Earnings, because the use of sample data from the Current Population Survey in this report precludes the publication of detailed occupational categories. But the general problem is more widespread than this, involving the new DOT classification as well as that used by the Bureau of the Census. The Committee is postponing consideration of such groupings until it has reviewed the detailed occupational classification system used by the Bureau of the Census and has had more time to assess the implications of the new DOT structure, since working with these materials may affect possible groupings. One aspect of the grouping problem should be mentioned now, however: the use of high speed computers makes grouping a relatively simple tabulating operation and, therefore, it is possible that several groupings could be developed, each of which might serve different analytical purposes.

The Committee is also concerned with the relationship between the International Standard Classification of Occupations, as developed by the International Labour Office, and the classification systems used in the United States. Revision of the ISCO is now under discussion and one member of the Committee has recently attended the ILO sessions in Geneva on this subject. He has drawn up a report of these sessions which will be circulated to the Committee so that it may consider the implications for U. S. data of the revisions being discussed.

5. Development of a Standard Occupational Classification System. The Committee plans, as one of its long run objectives, to investigate the possibility of establishing a Standard Occupational Classification, analogous to the Standard Industrial Classification, and to establish such a system if it appears possible. It is interesting to note that an SOC was one of the original objectives of the Committee when it was first instituted, over twenty-five years ago, and that it was never able to accomplish this, although the development of the Convertibility List, mentioned above in item 1, was a first step in that direction.

A number of the items mentioned under previous headings can be construed as similar first steps; in particular, those pertaining to the evaluation of the use of the new DOT for different purposes (establishment reports, household reports) and our proposed review of the International Standard Classification of Occupations are relevant to such a development. In addition, as noted above, the Committee has solicited the views of interested Federal agencies on the subject.

It is hoped that a session can be organized at the August, 1966, meetings of the American Statistical Association, a parent body of the original Committee, for which several papers dealing with this subject will be prepared and at which an opportunity for general discussion among persons working in the field of occupation statistics will be presented.

6. Development of a Training and Educational Classification for use in conjunction with occupation data. One aspect of occupation data that has been receiving increasing attention recently is the relationship between education and training, on the one hand, and occupation, on the other. The significance of this relationship for educational planning is obvious; yet, in fact, very little is known about the specific types of education and training that characterize the population, or the labor force, except the general level of formal schooling attained. The Committee hopes to explore the possibilities of developing more specific data on the linkages between these two aspects of manpower, that is, its training and its occupational distribution. Recently, work in Europe has begun along these same lines and it is hoped that some interchange of ideas and experience can take place.

Members of the
Interagency Committee on Occupational Classification

Agency	Main Committee	Subcommittee on Research
Bureau of the Budget	Miss Margaret E. Martin, Chairman Mrs. Ann R. Miller	Mrs. Ann R. Miller, Chairman Miss Margaret E. Martin
Bureau of the Census	Mr. Stanley Greene Mr. Robert B. Pearl	Mr. Stanley Greene Mr. Robert B. Pearl
Bureau of Employment Security	Mr. Carl A. Heinz Mr. Harold Kuptzin	Mr. Leon Lewis
Bureau of Labor Statistics	Mr. Robert B. Steffes Mr. Sol Swerdloff	Mr. Robert B. Steffes
Business & Defense Services Admin.	Mr. Gabriel Cherin	Mr. Gabriel Cherin
Civil Service Commission	Mr. Sam Leff	
Department of the Air Force	Colonel Earl D. Seal	
Department of the Army	Mr. Harry I. Hadley	
Department of the Navy	Mr. D. George Price	
National Science Foundation	Mr. Robert W. Cain Dr. Milton Levine	Mr. Robert W. Cain
Office of Asst. Sec. of Defense-Manpower	Mr. Mark Colburn	
Office of Education	Dr. W. Dale Chismore	
Office of Manpower Policy Evaluation Research, Dept. of Labor	Mr. Stuart Garfinkle	Mr. Stuart Garfinkle

Agency	Main Committee	Subcommittee on Research
Public Health Service	Miss Lillian Guralnick	
Social Security Administration	Mr. Roberto Fuentes	